

**Remarks/Arguments**

Claims 1 through 6 have been cancelled and new claims 7 through 21 have been added.

The new claims clarify that the flow distributor is upstream of the downstream molding region. Basically, the flow distributor divides the flow into one of at least two channels and includes a first adjustment means associated with the at least two channels to manually vary the distribution of molten plastic from the plastic supply through the outlets which provide the plastic to the ring shaped mouth of the first internal die passage. The die tooling is elongate and the length of the tooling allows the plastic to be distributed through the ring shaped cross section of the passage such that there is an even distribution at the downstream molding region. Furthermore, with this arrangement the flow distributor can remain in place and the die tooling can be replaced.

The primary reference D1 WO 00/07801A corresponds to Canadian Patent 2,339,196 and operates in a different manner. According to this reference sixteen (16) or more passages are provided in the flow distribution arrangement with each of these passages being of an equal length. The mouths of the passages are distributed around the periphery of the flow distributor and provide molten plastic to the molding location. This is evident from Figure 1 of the reference where the flow distributor arrangement 13a is provided immediately adjacent the molding region. This reference does not provide a flow distributor having the at least two channels which cooperate with the die tooling having the circular and cross section die passage where the length of the die tooling in combination with the output from the at least two channels of the flow distributor provide

effective distribution. As can be appreciated, this is in direct contrast to the sixteen (16) equal length passages of the primary reference. Furthermore, it would be in direct contradiction to the primary reference to use an adjustment means as this would increase or decrease the resistance and thereby change the equivalent length of the passages. As can be appreciated this is contradiction to the principles of the invention where the channels are all to be of the same length.

As can be appreciated with the primary reference any change in tooling also involves the flow distributor. Thus the tooling cannot be easily changed as is possible with the present arrangement.

The secondary reference of EP 0363716 merely includes a bolt adjustment 52 which acts on a bushing to change the position of the bushing relative to the socket 48 for centering of the mandrel 20 in hollow member 12. This adjustment mechanism does not adjust the flow through channel in a convenient way for manual adjustment of the distribution of the plastic at the downstream molding position.

Respectfully submitted,



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